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SUBJECT: CAMEROON -- 2009 TIP REPORT: PRESS GUIDANCE AND
DEMARCHE

REF: A. (A) STATE 59732
[1](#)B. (B) STATE 005577

[1](#)1. This is an action cable; see paras 5 through 7 and 10.

[1](#)2. On June 16, 2009, at 10:00 a.m. EDT, the Secretary will release the 2009 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report at a press conference in the Department's press briefing room. This release will receive substantial coverage in domestic and foreign news outlets. Until the time of the Secretary's June 16 press conference, any public release of the Report or country narratives contained therein is prohibited.

[1](#)3. The Department is hereby providing Post with advance press guidance to be used on June 16 or thereafter. Also provided is demarche language to be used in informing the Government of Cameroon of its tier ranking and the TIP Report's imminent release. The text of the TIP Report country narrative is provided, both for use in informing the Government of Cameroon, and in any local media release by Post's public affairs section on June 16 or thereafter. Drawing on information provided below in paras 8 and 9, Post may provide the host government with the text of the TIP Report narrative no earlier than 1200 noon local time Monday June 15 for WHA, AF, EUR, and NEA countries and OOB local time Tuesday June 16 for SCA and EAP posts. Please note, however, that any public release of the Report's information should not/precede the Secretary's release at 10:00 am EDT on June 16.

[1](#)4. The entire TIP Report will be available on-line at www.state.gov/g/tip shortly after the Secretary's June 16 release. Hard copies of the Report will be pouched to posts in all countries appearing on the Report. The Secretary's statement at the June 16 press event, and the statement of and fielding of media questions by G/TIP's Director and Senior Advisor to the Secretary, Ambassador-at-Large Luis CdeBaca, will be available on the Department's website shortly after the June 16 event. Ambassador de Baca will also hold a general briefing for officials of foreign embassies in Washington DC on June 17 at 3:30 pm EDT.

[1](#)5. Action Request: No earlier than 12 noon local time on Monday June 15 for WHA, AF, EUR, and NEA posts and OOB local time on Tuesday June 16 for SCA and EAP posts, please inform the appropriate official in the Government of Cameroon of the June 16 release of the 2009 TIP Report, drawing on the points in para 9 (at Post's discretion) and including the text of the country narrative provided in para 8. For countries where the State Department has lowered the tier ranking, it is particularly important to advise governments prior to the Report being released in Washington on June 16.

[1](#)6. Action Request continued: Please note that, for those countries which will not receive an "action plan" with specific recommendations for improvement, posts should draw host governments' attention to the areas for improvement identified in the 2009 Report, especially highlighted in the "Recommendations" section of the second paragraph of the narrative text. This engagement is important to establishing the framework in which the government's performance will be

judged for the 2010 Report. If posts have questions about which governments will receive an action plan, or how they may follow up on the recommendations in the 2009 Report, please contact G/TIP and the appropriate regional bureau.

17. Action Request continued: On June 16, please be prepared to answer media inquiries on the Report's release using the press guidance provided in para 11. If Post wishes, a local press statement may be released on or after 10:30 am EDT June 16, drawing on the press guidance and the text of the TIP Report's country narrative provided in para 8.

18. Begin Final Text of Cameroon,s country narrative in the 2009 TIP Report:

Cameroon (TIER 2 Watch List)

Cameroon is a source, transit, and destination country for women and children trafficked for the purposes of forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation. Most victims are children trafficked within the country, with girls primarily trafficked for domestic servitude and sexual exploitation. Both boys and girls are also trafficked within Cameroon for forced labor in sweatshops, bars, restaurants, on tea and cocoa plantations, in mines, and for street vending and possibly for forced begging. Authorities report that within the country some parents loan their child for monetary

compensation for forced labor in domestic service, street vending, or prostitution. Children are trafficked to Cameroon from Nigeria, Chad, the Central African Republic, Congo, Benin, and Niger for forced labor in agriculture, fishing, street vending, and spare-parts shops. Children from Mali are trafficked to Cameroon by religious instructors for forced begging. Cameroon is a transit country for children trafficked between Gabon and Nigeria, and from Nigeria to Saudi Arabia. It is a source country for women transported by sex trafficking rings to Europe, primarily France, Germany, and Switzerland. Reports indicate that traditional religious leaders may subject individuals to hereditary slavery practices rooted in ancestral master-slave relationships in some northern chiefdoms.

The Government of Cameroon does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. Despite these overall efforts, the government did not show evidence of progress in prosecuting and punishing trafficking offenders or protecting victims; therefore, Cameroon is placed on Tier 2 Watch List. While Cameroon pursued some trafficking investigations, the government reported no prosecutions or convictions and victim protection efforts remained weak.

Recommendations for Cameroon: Increase efforts to prosecute and convict trafficking offenders; educate police, judges, lawyers, and social workers about the law against child trafficking; finalize and enact the draft law criminalizing the trafficking of adults; investigate reports of hereditary slavery in the Northern Province; and develop and implement formal procedures through which law enforcement and victim protection officials may systematically identify trafficking victims among vulnerable populations and refer them for care.

Prosecution

The Government of Cameroon demonstrated minimal efforts to combat trafficking through law enforcement means during the last year. Cameroon does not prohibit all forms of trafficking, though it criminalizes child trafficking and slavery through its 2005 Law Combating Child Trafficking and Slavery, which prescribes a penalty of 20 years' imprisonment -- a punishment that is sufficiently stringent. Article 2(3)

of Cameroon,s Labor Code prohibits forced labor, prescribing an inadequate penalty of \$100 to \$3,000 in fines. The government,s 2006 draft law prohibiting trafficking has yet to be finalized and approved. Penal Code Article 346 criminalizes procuring, aiding, facilitating, or profiting from the prostitution of a child less than 16 years of age. This article prescribes a punishment of one to ten years, imprisonment and a fine, which is sufficiently stringent and commensurate with penalties for rape. The government did not report any prosecutions or convictions of trafficking offenders during the year, though it reported that it investigated three trafficking cases, one of which was conducted jointly with Beninese authorities, and arrested one suspect in September 2008. Three suspects arrested in January 2008 for allegedly trafficking seven children have not yet been prosecuted. A suspect arrested in December 2007 for trafficking a child who died in his custody remains out on bail. A Yaounde court in 2008 held hearings on six additional trafficking cases derived from arrests made in 2007; the cases remain pending in the court system. The government did not investigate traditional leaders in the Northern Provinces suspected of keeping hereditary servants in conditions of involuntary servitude. The Ministry of Justice in November 2008 opened a pilot data center as part of its effort to develop a computerized system for the collection of trafficking crime data. The database is expected to be operational by 2012. In October 2008, the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms jointly funded with the UN an anti-trafficking seminar for law enforcement officers and magistrates on strategies for investigating and prosecuting trafficking offenses.

Protection

The Government of Cameroon demonstrated weak efforts to protect trafficking victims over the last year. The government did not operate trafficking victim shelters, but rather referred victims to NGOs providing shelter and other victim services. The government reported that its nine centers for vulnerable children and additional centers for street children were accessible to trafficking victims. Authorities did not follow systematic procedures for identifying trafficking victims among vulnerable populations, such as street children, women in prostitution, and illegal immigrants. As a result, some victims may have been inappropriately incarcerated or fined for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being trafficked. Officials identified 18 suspected trafficking victims during the year and provided care to 15 of them at a government center for abandoned and orphaned children until Beninese officials repatriated them to Benin. The government referred one trafficking victim to his country,s consulate in Cameroon and another to an NGO for care. In September 2008, Cameroonian officials cooperated with Nigerian counterparts to repatriate a 12-year-old Nigerian girl who had been trafficked to Cameroon for forced domestic labor. The government encouraged victims to assist in trafficking investigations and prosecutions, though as noted earlier, there were no reported prosecutions during the year. The government provided foreign victims with temporary residency status until they were repatriated. It did not, however, provide legal alternatives to the removal of foreign victims to countries where they face hardship or retribution.

Prevention

The Government of Cameroon continued its efforts to prevent trafficking during the year. To commemorate the Day of the African Child in June 2008, Cameroon organized a children,s National Assembly session at which child Parliamentarians passed a resolution calling for the creation of structures to care for trafficking victims. Government radio and television broadcast anti-trafficking messages. The Cameroonian government briefed troops on anti-trafficking issues and related norms of behavior before they were deployed on international peacekeeping missions. In collaboration with the ICRC, the government also organized seminars for military and police leadership to keep them

updated on these international anti-trafficking norms. Cameroon has not finalized or adopted its draft national plan of action against trafficking. An existing inter-ministerial anti-trafficking committee did not meet during the past year. The government made no discernable efforts to reduce demand for forced labor or demand for commercial sex acts during the year.

19. Post may wish to deliver the following points, which offer technical and legal background on the TIP Report process, to the host government as a non-paper with the above TIP Report country narrative:

(begin non-paper)

-- The U.S. Congress, through its passage of the 2000 Trafficking Victims Protection Act, as amended (TVPA), requires the Secretary of State to submit an annual Report to Congress. The goal of this Report is to stimulate action and create partnerships around the world in the fight against modern-day slavery. The USG approach to combating human trafficking follows the TVPA and the standards set forth in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (commonly known as the "Palermo Protocol"). The TVPA and the Palermo Protocol recognize that this is a crime in which the victims, labor or services (including in the "sex industry") are obtained or maintained through force, fraud, or coercion, whether overt or through psychological manipulation. While much attention has focused on international flows, both the TVPA and the Palermo Protocol focus on the exploitation of the victim, and do not require a showing that the victim was moved.

-- Recent amendments to the TVPA removed the requirement that only countries with a "significant number" of trafficking victims be included in the Report. Beginning with the 2009 TIP Report, countries determined to be a country of origin, transit, or destination for victims of severe forms of trafficking are included in the Report and assigned to one of three tiers. Countries assessed as meeting the "minimum standards for the elimination of severe forms of trafficking" set forth in the TVPA are classified as Tier 1. Countries assessed as not fully complying with the minimum standards, but making significant efforts to meet those minimum standards are classified as Tier 2. Countries assessed as neither complying with the minimum standards nor making significant efforts to do so are classified as Tier 3.

-- The TVPA also requires the Secretary of State to provide a "Special Watch List" to Congress later in the year. Anti-trafficking efforts of the countries on this list are to be evaluated again in an Interim Assessment that the Secretary of State must provide to Congress by February 1 of each year. Countries are included on the "Special Watch List" if they move up in "tier" rankings in the annual TIP Report -- from 3 to 2 or from 2 to 1) or if they have been placed on the Tier 2 Watch List.

-- Tier 2 Watch List consists of Tier 2 countries determined: (1) not to have made "increasing efforts" to combat human trafficking over the past year; (2) to be making significant efforts based on commitments of anti-trafficking reforms over the next year, or (3) to have a very significant number of trafficking victims or a significantly increasing victim population. As indicated in reftel B, the TVPRA of 2008 contains a provision requiring that a country that has been included on Tier 2 Watch List for two consecutive years after the date of enactment of the TVPRA of 2008 be ranked as Tier 3. Thus, any automatic downgrade to Tier 3 pursuant to this provision would take place, at the earliest, in the 2011 TIP Report (i.e., a country would have to be ranked Tier 2 Watch List in the 2009 and 2010 Reports before being subject to Tier 3 in the 2011 Report). The new law allows for a waiver of this provision for up to two additional years upon a determination by the President that the country has developed

and devoted sufficient resources to a written plan to make significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with the minimum standards.

-- Countries classified as Tier 3 may be subject to statutory restrictions for the subsequent fiscal year on non-humanitarian and non-trade-related foreign assistance and, in some circumstances, withholding of funding for participation by government officials or employees in educational and cultural exchange programs. In addition, the President could instruct the U.S. executive directors to international financial institutions to oppose loans or other utilization of funds (other than for humanitarian, trade-related or certain types of development assistance) with respect to countries on Tier 3. Countries classified as Tier 3 that take strong action within 90 days of the Report's release to show significant efforts against trafficking in persons, and thereby warrant a reassessment of their Tier classification, would avoid such sanctions. Guidelines for such actions are in the DOS-crafted action plans to be shared by Posts with host governments.

-- The 2009 TIP Report, issuing as it does in the midst of the global financial crisis, highlights high levels of trafficking for forced labor in many parts of the world and systemic contributing factors to this phenomenon: fraudulent recruitment practices and excessive recruiting fees in workers, home countries; the lack of adequate labor protections in both sending and receiving countries; and the flawed design of some destination countries, "sponsorship systems" that do not give foreign workers adequate legal recourse when faced with conditions of forced labor. As the May 2009 ILO Global Report on Forced Labor concluded, forced labor victims suffer approximately \$20 billion in losses, and traffickers, profits are estimated at \$31 billion. The current global financial crisis threatens to increase the number of victims of forced labor and increase the associated "cost of coercion."

-- The text of the TVPA and amendments can be found on website www.state.gov/g/tip.

-- On June 16, 2009, the Secretary of State will release the ninth annual TIP Report in a public event at the State Department. We are providing you an advance copy of your country's narrative in that report. Please keep this information embargoed until 10:00 am Washington DC time June 16. The State Department will also hold a general briefing for officials of foreign embassies in Washington DC on June 17 at 3:30 pm EDT.

(end non-paper)

¶10. Posts should make sure that the relevant country narrative is readily available on or through the Mission's web page in English and appropriate local language(s) as soon as possible after the TIP Report is released. Funding for translation costs will be handled as it was for the Human Rights Report. Posts needing financial assistance for translation costs should contact their regional bureau's EX office.

¶11. The following is press guidance provided for Post to use with local media.

Q1: Why was Cameroon placed on the Tier 2 Watch List?

A: The Government of Cameroon does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. Despite these overall efforts, the government did not show evidence of progress in prosecuting and punishing trafficking offenders or protecting victims; therefore, Cameroon is placed on Tier 2 Watch List. While Cameroon pursued some trafficking investigations, the government reported no prosecutions or convictions and victim protection efforts remained weak.

Q2: What progress has Cameroon made in the last year?

A: During the year, Cameroonian officials identified 18 suspected trafficking victims and provided care to 15 of them at a government center for abandoned and orphaned children until Beninese officials repatriated them to Benin. The government referred one trafficking victim to his country,s consulate in Cameroon and another to an NGO for care. Cameroonian officials also cooperated with Nigerian counterparts to repatriate a 12-year-old Nigerian girl who had been trafficked to Cameroon for forced domestic labor. To commemorate the Day of the African Child in June 2008, Cameroon organized a children,s National Assembly session at which child Parliamentarians passed a resolution calling for the creation of structures to care for trafficking victims. Government radio and television also broadcast anti-trafficking messages during the year.

Q3: What can Cameroon do to further its fight against trafficking in persons?

A: Increase efforts to prosecute and convict trafficking offenders; educate police, judges, lawyers, and social workers about the law against child trafficking; finalize and enact the draft law criminalizing the trafficking of adults; investigate reports of hereditary slavery in the Northern Province; and develop and implement formal procedures through which law enforcement and victim protection officials may systematically identify trafficking victims among vulnerable populations and refer them for care.

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